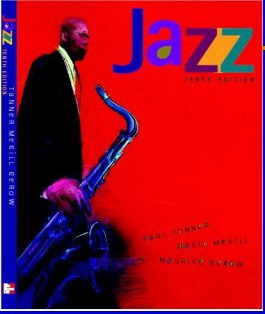


Jazz

Tenth Edition

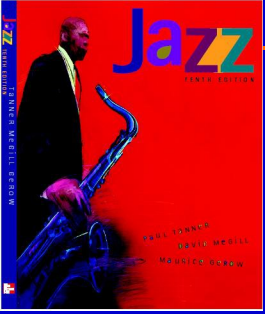
Chapter 3

PowerPoint
by
Sharon Ann Toman, 2004



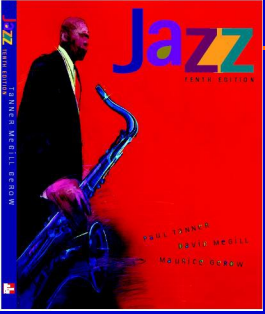
The Blues

- The blues has been played and sung in every era of jazz
- The blues can be performed with many interpretations



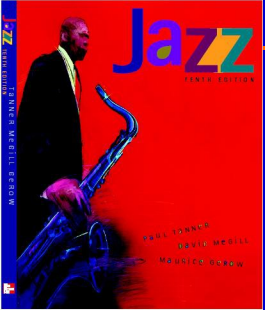
The Origin

- Early “blues” was a result of the slaves singing very sad songs about their suffering
 - It was in unison and no chords were used



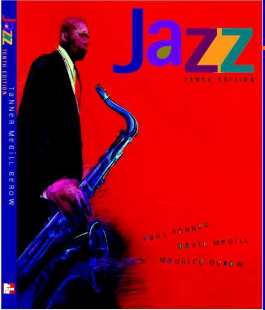
The Origin

- After the Civil War, it took on a special musical form - AAB (2-part form)
- The chords or harmonies that supported the vocal line became standardized
- These harmonies supported the three sung phrases



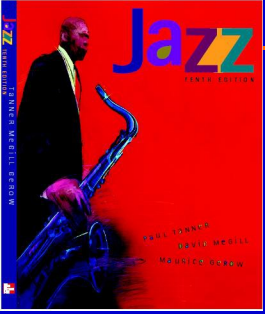
The Origin

- Many titles of music have the word “blues” in the title but are often not the blues because they lack the blues harmonic construction



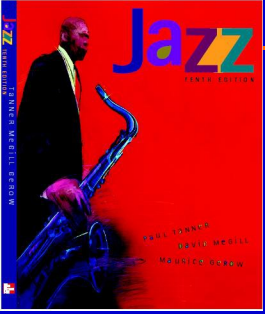
Blue Notes

- One characteristic associated with the blues is the *blues tonalities*
- *Blue tonalities* are midway between the tone E-flat and *E-natural* and between *B-flat* and *B-natural*
- Blues notes are heard in work songs, spirituals, and all styles of Jazz



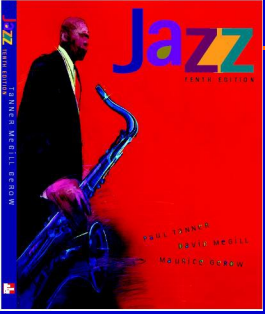
Field and Prison Hollers

- The work song sung collectively by plantation workers evolved into solo “hollers” or “cries”
- Work songs were sung across the open field (plantation)
 - Very free in form



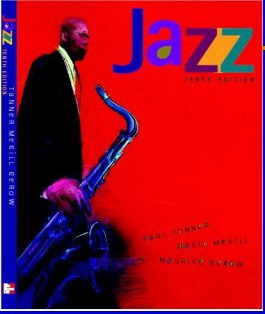
Field and Prison Hollers

- Prison Hollers were songs sung by prison inmates
 - Contributed to the type of vocalizations now associated with blues singing



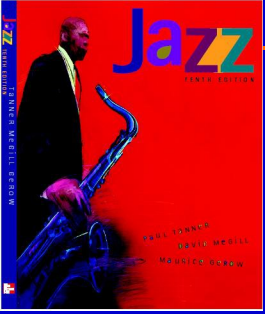
Blues Lyrics

- The meter of the blues lyrics is generally written in *iambic pentameter*.
 - Three lines of lyrics, the first 2 being similar - AAB
- Each line of the lyrics has **5(penta)** accented syllables which alternate with unaccented syllables (**iambic**)
 - Example of lyrics written in “iambic pentameter”:
 - “I hate to see the ev’nin sun go down”



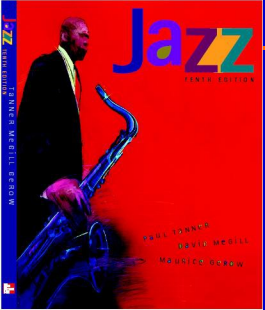
Blues Lyrics

- Blues Lyrics are usually 4 measures long and consists of 3 lines (AAB)
- Each line of the lyrics consists of 2 measures of music...and the remainder of the 2 measure is completed by an instrumentalist – **Fill-ins**



Blues Lyrics

- **Fill-ins:** 1st means to hear some of the jazz instrumentalists
- Later fill-ins were replaced by:
 - **Breaks:** a place where the entire ensemble stopped playing to feature the solo instrument filling in

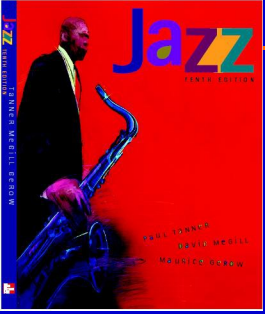


Blues Lyrics

- Blues lyrics are usually concerned with unhappy situations
 - Result: Their melancholy lyrics usually describe the blues emotion

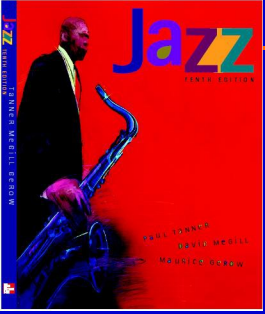
- Blues is only recognized by its melancholy lyrics

- But...blues can also be happy, swinging tunes



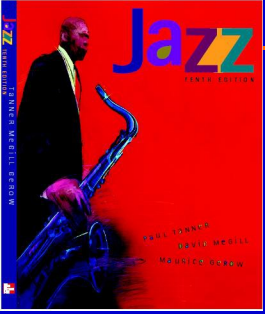
Blues Lyrics

- One common misconception about the blues is that:
 - The blues originated with work songs...but work songs were functional....but rather blues songs were emotional and had no specific function
- The word “blue” has been associated with melancholia as far back as Elizabethan times



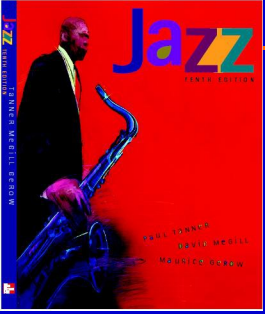
Country and Urban Blues

- **Country Blues** – usually accompanied by a guitar, harmonica, or both
 - Singer was usually a man
 - Most important figure of late country blue was:
 - Robert Johnson



Country and Urban Blues

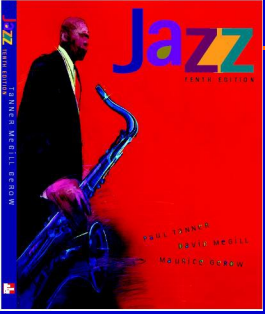
- **Urban Blues** - seems to be more rhythmic, more crisp than country blues, accompanied by a small group.
 - Singer was usually women



Two Blues Periods

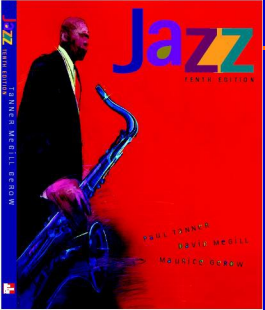
- 1st Blues period: Latter part of the 19th century to about 1930
 - Country Blues: e.g. Huddie Ledbetter
 - Urban Blues: e.g. Bessie Smith

- 2nd Blues period: 1930 to the present
 - e.g. B.B. King



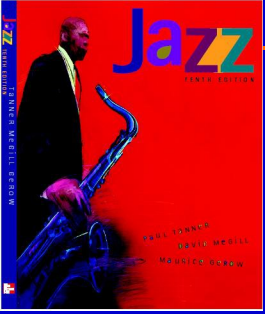
Blues Singers

- Bessie Smith (1894-1937)
- Ethel Waters (1896-1977)
- Billie Holiday (1915-1959)



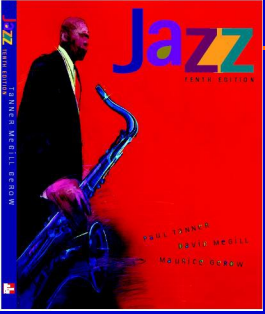
Blues Singers

- Bessie Smith:
 - Born in Tennessee
 - Made her first recording “Downhearted Blues” in 1923
 - Best known blues singer of the 1920s
 - Reshaped any given song with her own special vocal style and feelings about the text
 - Embellished the melodic line
 - Known as the “Empress of the Blues”



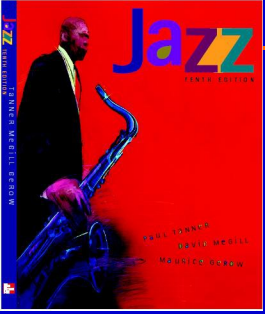
Blues Singers

- Bessie Smith:
 - Helped train singers on the minstrel circuits
 - Set the standard for all future singing of the blues
 - Recorded 160 songs
 - At the time of her death, about ten million of her records had been sold (1927)
 - In 1937, she died penniless in an automobile accident



Ethel Waters

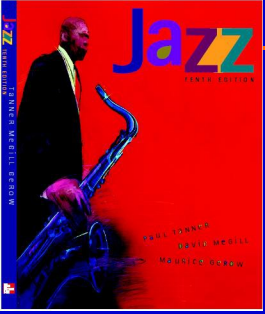
- Made a name for herself in the early 1920s
- Repertoire ranged from the blues to jazz styles of singing and then to pop
- Recorded with swing bands such as Benny Goodman and the Dorsey Brothers
- Star of Broadway musicals, films and television shows



Ethel Waters

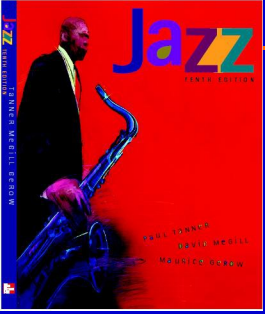
- Her singing style influenced such singers as:
Ella Fitzgerald, Pearl Bailey, Lena Horne,
Sarah Vaughan and others

- Different from other blues singers
 - She was not a shouter
 - Her singing style was smoother, and her tones
and vibrato were unique



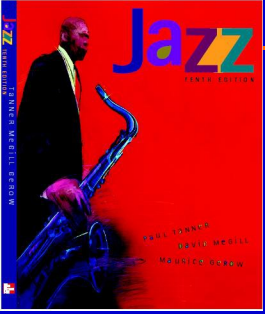
Billie Holiday

- Holiday crossed many musical lines while staying with her individual singing style
- Influenced by Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong
- Frustrating aspect of Holiday's career must have been that unwillingness of the public to accept black and white musicians performing together on the same bandstand



Billie Holiday

- Admired and was influenced by Louis Armstrong and Lester Young
- She added her own feelings, her own lifestyles to her singing style



Contemporary Blues

- The blues is a tradition all its own
- The blues continues to export its influence on other music styles while maintaining its own identity
- Contemporary blues singers like B.B. King and Robert Johnson
 - Represent the contemporary vitality of the blues tradition itself